

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

The specification has been amended on pages 8-9.

Claims 4 and 9 are being amended to be in better form for U.S. practice without changing their scope.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claims 1-16 remain pending in this application.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4). Specifically, the Office Action states on page 2, "reference characters '7' and '14' have both been used to designate support." The specification and Fig. 2 have been amended to clarify that only reference numeral 14 refers to the support, thus overcoming this objection to the drawings.

The drawings were also objected to for not labeling elements in Fig. 3, and in Fig. 4 because reference character 28 is not pointing to the inner ring of bearing 24. Fig. 3 has been amended to label elements not labeled, and Fig. 4 has been amended such that reference numeral 28 points to the inner ring of bearing 24, thus overcoming the objections to the drawings.

Specification

The amendment filed on December 1, 2003 was objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 132(a) as allegedly introducing new matter into the disclosure. Specifically, the Office Action alleged that language added in paragraph [0051] was not supported by the original disclosure. Applicant respectfully traverses this objection. Paragraph [0051] was amended in a

preliminary amendment filed with the application on December 1, 2003. Thus, because the preliminary amendment was filed with the application on the same day, the language added to paragraph [0051] in the preliminary amendment is not new matter. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection under 35 U.S.C. § 132(a).

A Supplemental Declaration acknowledging the amendment filed on December 1, 2003 is submitted herewith.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Office Action stated on page 3: "Figures, e.g., Fig. 2 or Fig. 4 do not disclose a common connection bearing shell." Applicant submits, however, that both the first embodiment as illustrated in Fig. 2 as well as the second embodiment as illustrated in Fig. 4, and as described in the specification, disclose a common connection bearing shell as recited in the claims.

With respect to the first embodiment of Fig. 2, for example, the specification in paragraph [0044] provides: "The connecting spindle 15 forms a connecting bearing shell for the rolling-contact bodies of the first, second and third rolling-contact bearings 19a, 19b, 16a, 16b." Thus, in the first embodiment, the connecting spindle 15 forms the common connection bearing shell as clearly described in the specification and illustrated in Fig. 2.

With respect to the second embodiment of Fig. 4, the specification in paragraph [0051] provides: "The outer ring 26 of the first rolling-contact bearing 24 and the inner ring 25 of the second rolling-contact bearing 22 are connected to one another, and together form a connecting bearing shell...". Thus, as clearly disclosed in the specification, the outer ring 26 and the inner ring 25 are connected to each other. Furthermore, Fig. 4 does not illustrate any gaps between between the outer ring 26 and the inner ring 25. In Fig. 4, which is a technical drawing, the rings 26 and 25 as well as the region between the rings are illustrated with a partial cut away that is hatched. Thus, the region between the rings 25 and 26 comprises a material, just as the rings themselves do. Fig. 4, therefore, illustrates no gaps between the rings 25 and 26. While the hatching of the rings and in the region between is shown in a

cutaway view, and is not illustrated over the entire ring or region between, such cutaway views are common practice in technical drawings, and one skilled in the art would recognize that the entire rings 25 and 26, as well as the region between, are composed of material.

For the above reasons, applicant submits that the claims are fully supported by the disclosure as originally filed, and respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph be withdrawn.

Applicant further respectfully request that if the next Office Action includes any rejections based on prior art, that the Action be properly made non-final.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date November 22, 2005

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheets attached in connection with the above-identified application containing Figures 2-4 are being presented as a new formal drawing sheets to be substituted for the previously submitted drawing sheets. The drawing Figures 2-4 have been amended. Appended to this amendment is an annotated copy of the previous drawing sheet which has been marked to show changes presented in the replacement sheet of the drawing.

The specific changes which have been made to Figure 2 are to change the reference numeral 7 to 14 for labeling the support. Figure 3 has been amended to include reference numerals 5, 14, 16a, 16b and 18 to label features mentioned in the specification. Figure 4 has been amended to extend the lead line from reference numeral 28 to the inner ring of bearing 24.

Fig. 2

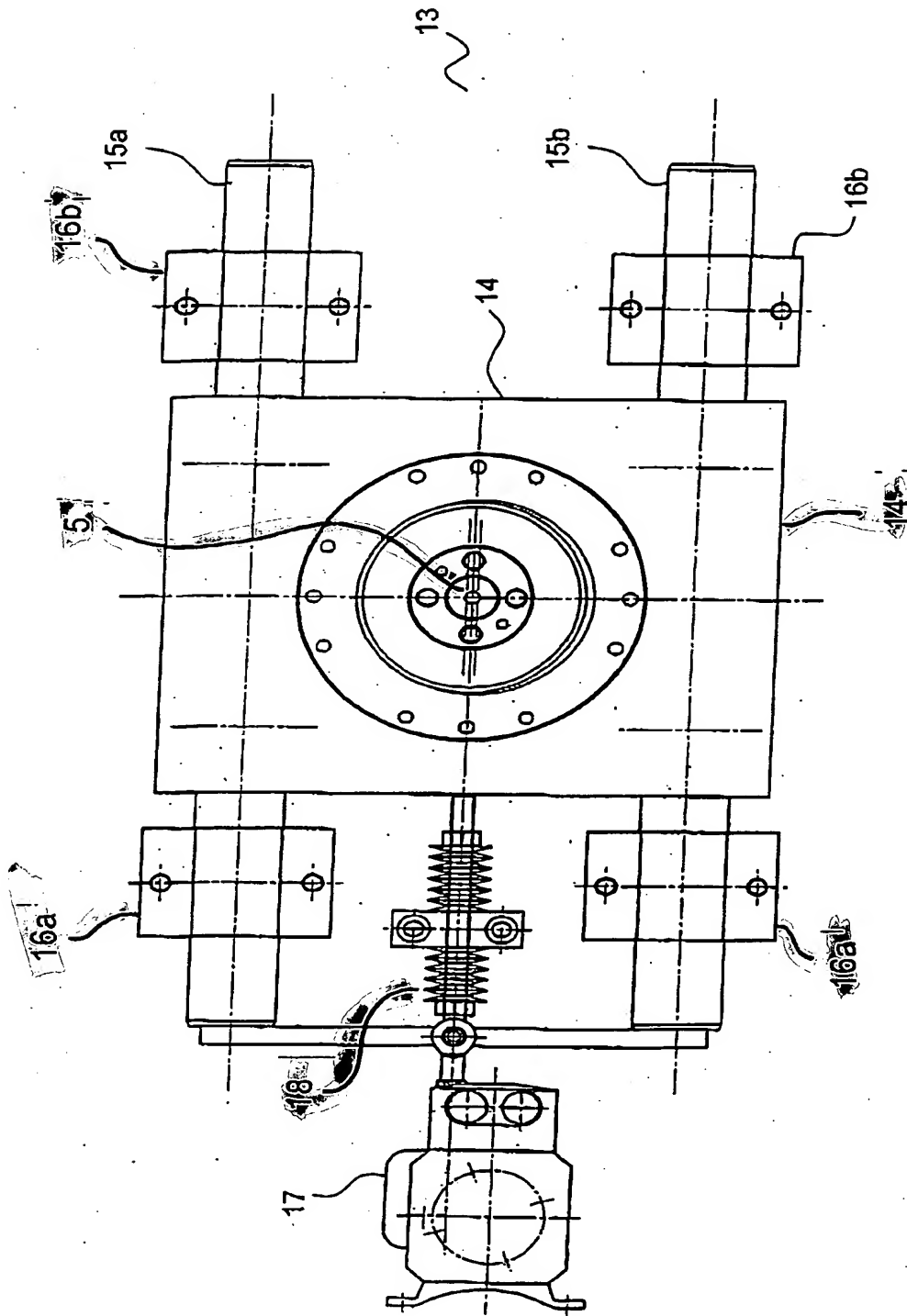


Fig. 3

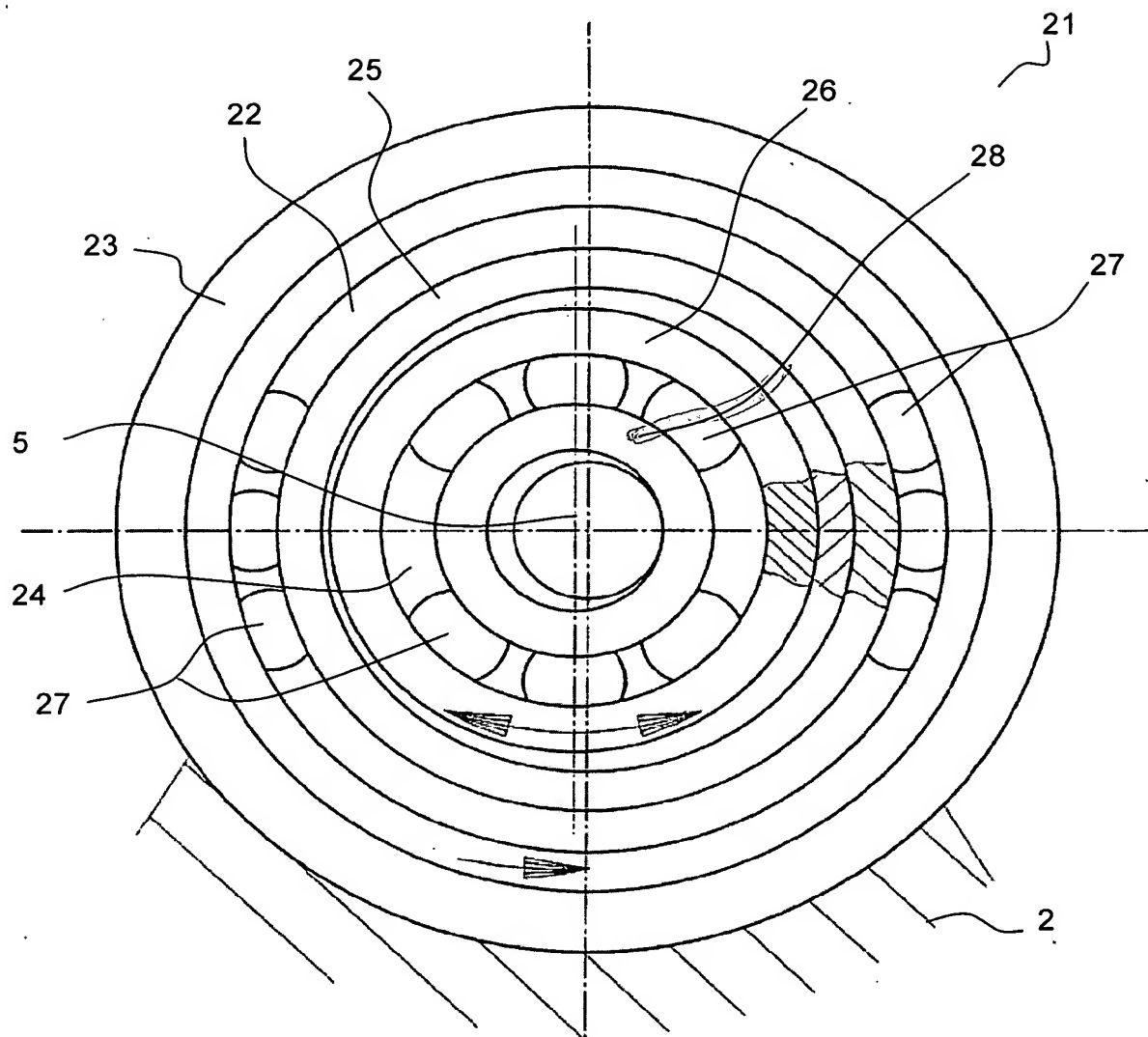


Fig. 4